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CONTACT: Roxane Marquez
at (213) 974-4111 (office)
or (213) 598-5463 (cellular)

GLORIA MOLINA AND U.S. SEN. BARBARA BOXER VISIT EASTSIDE EXTENSION AT 1ST STREET BRIDGE

Six-Mile, \$899 Million Light Rail Project to Open by Fall 2009

LOS ANGELES (February 20, 2008)—Los Angeles County Supervisor Gloria Molina and U.S. Sen. Barbara Boxer joined other elected officials, transit advocates, land use planners, and local residents to observe construction on the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension light rail line, which will connect downtown L.A. to East L.A. by Fall 2009.

“Sen. Barbara Boxer was among those friend in Congress who fought hard so that the Eastside Extension received \$60 million in federal funds—the vital chunk of change that allowed construction to start,” said Sup. Gloria Molina. “Now, two years later, Metro is making great headway. And I am especially proud of the fact that the East L.A. Civic Center will serve as the Eastside Extension’s second-to-last stop.”

This six-mile, \$899 million light rail line will connect East L.A.—the fifth most densely-populated neighborhood in the entire U.S.—to the rest of L.A. County’s light rail network. It will connect Union Station in downtown L.A. with East Los Angeles via Little Tokyo/Arts District and Boyle Heights that will feature 1.7 miles of tunnel and eight new stations. Sen. Barbara Boxer helped secure over \$460 million in federal funding—including close to \$180 million over the past two years.

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Construction on the 1st Street Bridge should be completely finished by the end of February. The entire Eastside Extension should be operational by Fall 2009. So far, the project is within budget, on-time, and boasts a stellar safety record.

“Some have suggested that the Eastside Extension is a psychological barrier of sorts that will divide the Eastside,” Sup. Gloria Molina said. “But I disagree. I see this light rail line as a way to connect Eastside communities together, not divide them apart. And I know that if he could be with us today, the late Rep. Edward R. Roybal—who championed this project for decades and who was a mentor of mine—would agree. He strongly believed that the people of East L.A. had just as much right to high-quality mass transit option as people from other areas of L.A. County. We will be thinking of him, and thanking him, when the Eastside Extension is up and running right through the heart of the very community he was so proud of represent.”

“We also will be very thankful for the help the Eastside Extension received from other friends in Congress—friends like Sen. Barbara Boxer and Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard,” Molina concluded. “We thank both of you for taking the time to visit this project that means so much to so many of us. Your help in securing over \$460 million for the Eastside Extension is appreciated, and it will be remembered.”

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